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REMARKS
ON A
BRASS MEDAL
OF OUR SAVIOUR,

FOUND IN THE FRIAR'S WALK IN THE VICINITY OF
CORK,

IN OCTOBER 1818 ;

By HENRY J. MONCK MASON, L.L.D. M. R. I. A.



Read Jan. 25th, 1819.

IT will be necessary minutely to describe this curious relic before I institute an inquiry into its antiquity. Upon one of its sides is exhibited the head of our Saviour, with the letters ישי on the left, and נ on the right of the figure. The three first letters are “*Jesu*,” the final Hajin being omitted, “*more veteribus usitato* ;” because, as Elias Thesbites, an authority relied upon by all the writers on the subject of those inscriptions, observes, “*litera Hajin ardua sit, ac difficilis pro gentibus ; ideo in linguâ suâ non dicunt Jeschuah, sed Jeschu ; propterea Judæi etiam vocant eum Jesu, absque ‘Hajin.’*”*

B

* It is curious to remark that, although the same authority of Thesbites is relied on by all, it is quoted by the several writers as justifying conclusions directly opposite to each other.

With respect to the letter Aleph, it must either signify the date of the period when it was struck, or have some other allusion. It cannot, in my opinion, be a date; for, supposing it to be so, it must express the number one, or one thousand. The latter of these significations will scarcely be contended for; since, besides that there is no point to the Aleph, such as is attached to it when it stands for 1000, this construction would bring us to fix, as an æra for the stamping of the medal, the commencement of the eleventh century, which was the centre of the darkest age, when ancient arts were no more, nor had they as yet commenced to revive; a period, when a medal like this could not have been executed. If then the Aleph signify a date, it must be that of one year; and this, either from the Incarnation or the Resurrection. The former is the more probable of these two (although I reject them both,) because the Incarnation of our Saviour is the subject of the inscription; but the æra called “Anno Domini,” which was dated from the birth of Christ, was first used in the sixth * century at the earliest. So that, if the Aleph mean the year one of the vulgar æra, the medal must have been the manufacture of later years, and the date an imposition. It may be said to relate to the Resurrection, and to be stamped in commemoration of the anniversary of that great event; but, besides that the inscription upon the other side of the medal does not justify this supposition; besides, that the indulging of it must lead us necessarily into much vague conjecture; I think the following fact will induce any candid inquirer to give to this letter

By one author the omission of the Hain is insisted on as a proof of forgery; with another it adds to the probability of the medal being both genuine and antique.—Rowland's *Mona Ant. restaur.* p. 318. Morinus and others, as quoted hereafter.

* See O'Connor, *Rerum Hiber. Scriptores. Epis. Nuncup.* p. ciii. note 1.

any other meaning, that may appear probable, rather than one, which will fix the first century for the stamping of the medal. The fact I allude to is, that no such memorial is, in any the remotest degree, alluded to by the early Christian writers, or by the Fathers of the Church. Had it existed in their day, it could not have been quite unknown; had it been known, it could not but have been very interesting. The magnificent expence of Mary, in anointing our Saviour towards his burial, was thought worthy of such particular remembrance, that wherever the gospel was preached it should be related; is it likely then, that this costly commemoration of an event so infinitely more important, would not only have passed unnoticed in the Acts, or in the Epistles, but also in the works of the erudite and voluminous Fathers * of the Church? In fine, if any single passage from any one of these be quoted that makes mention of any such medals, we may then be reasonably induced to give to them the very great antiquity that some persons contend for.

Let us now inquire what meaning the Aleph may possess, if it be not a date.

Our learned and ingenious Vice Provost† has suggested, that, as Aleph is the initial letter of both the words אִרְם, Homo, and אֱלֹהִים or אֵל, Deus, it is meant to relate to the double nature of the Redeemer; a doctrine of primary importance to the Christian faith, and which is implied by the inscription of the other side.

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* It is rightly said, in Rowland's *Mona Antiq. Restaur.* in speaking of the Anglesea Medal, that a passage of St. Austin there quoted refers, not to any known existing resemblance of our Saviour, but to our abstracted idea or mental conception of his appearance. Indeed if St. Austin, in the passage alluded to, means any thing more, it proves that he had no knowledge of the existence of these medals.

† The Rev. John Barrett, D. D.

We have the authority of Buxtorf and others, that the letter Aleph has been frequently used alone, to represent each of these words; and the same Hebrew scholars inform us, that it also stands for the word אֲדֹנָי, Dominus. This, therefore, is the construction which Wagenseil* and Morinus give to it, as placed upon this medal; which also the Vice Provost is rather inclined to prefer: it is, indeed, in my mind the most likely to be correct.†

The inscription upon the reverse side is as follows:

משיח מלך בא בשלום ו אר מ אדם עשוי חי

Of the eighth letter there was once some doubt, because of its being somewhat indistinct: but a closer examination, and the analogy of all similar medals, determine it to be a Beth. The antepenultimate letter is also indistinct; it may either be a Hajin, or a Jod with a Vau: I am inclined to agree with Dr. Barrett in thinking it the latter, admitting thus a construction less forced, and more analogous to other specimens. The following is perhaps the proper translation of the above—"Messias Rex venit in pace, et lux * de homine facta est vita." In the first part of this transla-

* V. Wag. Sota. V. 1, p. 576, &c.

† It may be worthy of remark, that the letter א was, as Waserus informs us, always stamped upon the Hebrew sheckles, as a mark which "justum ipsorum atque legitimum pondus docet:" and also that "a square, whereon is figured the monogram of the name of Christ, was Constantine the Great's ensign, after he had embraced Christianity. It has an "Alpha and Omega" on the sides, signifying the Divinity of Jesus, who says of himself, in the "Revelations, "Ego sum Alpha and Omega." (Anon. work, from the French, on the "Knowledge of Medals," p. 97.) "It was common among the Greek Emperors to put his "image upon their medals." Same author.

‡ Thus Waserus, Leusden, Alstedius, &c. translate it: it seems to allude to the text of St. John I. 4. "καὶ ἡ ζωὴ ἡν τὸ φῶς τῶν ἀνθρώπων." "And the life was the light of men." It may also be "lux ex homine factus est vivens."

tion, all the written authorities agree; but Dr. Barrett expresses his doubts whether it would not be better, "Messias regnat," instead of "Rex." The original will bear both of these interpretations.

Wagenseil contends that the latter part should be, "homo ex homine," &c.; because that the Vau, which is radical, is omitted in \aleph , lux; but he argues his point with some weakness. It is necessary for his construction to suppose, not only that the Resh should be read a Daleth, which might be granted him, but that a final Mem should have been left out by the error of the maker of the medal.* Now one half of this stretch of supposition would have sufficed to have restored the word \aleph to its perfection, by supposing the \aleph (a letter, by the way, more easy to overlook or omit than the final Mem) to have been omitted through mistake. This conjecture would have left him at liberty to agree with all other writers upon the subject, had he desired it. It is further to be observed, concerning the construction which I have given in conformity with the more general opinion, that it is impossible in our medal to read the second letter of this word as a Daleth.

Another, and the most disputed word, is the penultimate of the inscription: the second letter is indisputably a Shin, the first may be a Pe * or a Hajin, and all the authorities induce us to read it

* He supposes " excidisse Mem, eam ob causam, quia sequenti verbo idem elementum est " initiale; idque non tam sculptoris, quam ipsius autoris potuit accidisse errore. Nec enim " est alius quem magis frequenter *scribentes* committunt, quam ut litera ante sibi similem, ab " iis negligatur." This, I allow is common in the hurry of writing, but is it at all probable it should happen in the slow process of engraving or the striking of a die ?

* It is to be observed, that the Pe and the Hajin have been written in a manner so similar in some antient MSS. that it is difficult to distinguish them from each other. Thus it is in a

the latter. Considering it so, we must suppose the remainder of the word to be a Jod and a Vau. The Vice Provost is also decidedly of this opinion. This word, therefore, I consider to be "hassui."

Before I institute an inquiry into the genuineness of this medal, or the probable time of its being struck, it is necessary that I should give a short account from other authors of similar medals, which have been commented on by the learned. I shall first mention Theseus Ambrosius,* his words are—"Cum Romæ essem, in felicioribus Julii II. Pontificis maximi, et in sequentibus Leonis X. temporibus memini me vidisse in æneis numismatis: et anno præterito in ære conflatam, servatoris nostri imaginem cum literis "Samaritanis," &c. "in cujus alterâ parte literæ conflatae seu percussæ videbantur, quarum sensus talis erat, Messias Rex venit in pace, Deus Homo factus est." In this coin the word אלהים Elohim, occurs instead of וואר, Ve or me—the letters were Samaritan.

Waserus quotes Thes. Ambrosius, in his work upon Hebrew coins,† and gives a very poor engraving of a medal, which he describes to have been of brass. The head on it looks to the right hand, and is placed between the letters of the name. There is no Aleph; and, in the inscription upon the reverse, there is a Vau to complete the original Hebrew word נא. The penultimate word is עשי hassui, which Waserus construes "facta est," rendering the sentence thus, "et lux de homine facta est vita."

MS. in the College library, which was collated for Dr. Kennicott. Ludovicus Capellus has remarked much upon the confusion of Hebrew letters, one with another.

* De Lit. Samar. cap. 5, fol. 21, b.

† De Antiq. nummis Hebræorum p. 62.

Hottinger* mentions both the preceding, and gives a plate of one in his possession, which was of silver. It agrees with ours, and has the penultimate word "hassui." It is strange that this plate has the last word יח; but Hottinger, in giving the description of it in his text, copies the sentence without it, and translates it thus, "lux ex homine factus." Another strange variance between his plate and text is, that in the latter he places a Vau in the word נא, from whence we may indeed conclude, that, if any letter were omitted in the die by mistake, it must have been the Vau in נא, and not a final mem.

Crinesius† mentions the medals of Thes. Ambrosius and of Waserus, but with nothing particularly worthy of noticing in this place.

Leusden‡ says, that he had one of brass, and quotes ¶Alstedius concerning it. I shall revert to these authors hereafter: the specimen given by both of them agrees entirely with that of Waserus: they both construe the inscription as he does.

Wagenseil§ describes two medals: upon one side of the first is the head of our Saviour, and upon the other the words, ||

ישוע נצרי משיח יהוה ואדם יחד

Or, Jesus Nazarenus Messias, Jehovah et homo simul.

This medal approaches near to that, which was found in the island of Anglesea, and is represented by Wagenseil as being rare. The second is entirely similar to the medal which forms our subject, and the penultimate word is "hassui". Of this specimen he

* Cippi Hebr. p. 149. Tab. vi. n. 5.

† Babel, sive de Confusione Linguarum, cap. II. Mem. 1. p. 20, &c. Ed. Noriberg, 1629.

‡ Philologus Hebr. mixtus Dissert. 28, de num. Hebr. p. 192.

¶ Præcognita Theologica, p. 550.

§ Sota, v. 1. p. 576, &c. &c.

Jeshuang Nazri Meshiah Jehovah ve Adam Jackad.

observes, “alter, præterquam, quod et a nobis possidetur, in multo-
 rum est manibus, et passim incidas in infantes, qui eum e collo
 “suspensum gestant.” The writing upon this medal he wishes to
 construe thus: “Messias Rex venit in pace, et Homo ex homine
 “factus est vivus, sive verus.” I shall comment upon these observa-
 tions hereafter.

Morinus* follows the opinions of Wagenseil, but says nothing
 upon this part of the subject that is worthy of observation here.
 They are also slightly noticed by Walton, in the Prolegomena to
 the Polyglot Bible.

The next notice that I shall mention of these medals is that of one
 which was found in the Island † of Anglesea; it was of silver, and
 inscribed thus, “Jeschuah gibbor Meschiah havah vAdam Joked”,
 according to the description that is given in Rowland’s work. It
 is needless to dwell here upon the probability of there being much
 error in this reading; it is translated into English thus, in the letter
 alluded to, “Jesus is, and was, the mighty and great Messias, or
 Man Mediator, or Reconciler.”

Lastly, a letter has been received by Dr. Quarry of Cork, from
 the Rev. Thomas Symonds of Oxfordshire, with a fac simile of one
 of those medals, which is in his possession. From this letter it ap-
 pears, that the medal described in it is of silver and smaller than
 ours, and that in other respects they entirely agree. The last letter
 of the penultimate word is in both specimens indistinct: Dr. Quar-
 ry admits that it may be the remnant of an Hajin, but he seems
 rather to think it a Vau and a Yod.

* Morinus de Linguâ primævali, c. q. p. 305. n. 12, &c.

† See Rowland’s Mona Antiq. restaur. ed. 1723, in 4to. p. 318.

Pinkerton says nothing of these medals ; of the Hebrew shekels he expresses the most decided contempt. He admits of some of them to be genuine ;* but says that the same impression runs through all the coins of this *barbarous* nation, and that the admission of but one of them is rightly esteemed a disgrace to a cabinet. It is proper to recollect, that, in laying down this law, he confines his observations to the rude Hebrew coins ; nor does he seem to have a knowledge of the specimens of more finished art, that are the subjects of our inquiry. But, even if he had spoken of these latter, I must confess, that the partiality, not savouring much either of learning or of taste, which is manifested in this passage, and elsewhere, against the Jews, his scepticism in some matters, and dogmatism in others, would at least incline me to retort upon his judgment the same indifference, which he does not hesitate to lavish upon that of others ;† and certainly, were our observations concerning the Jews confined to mere matters of taste, the fabricators of the temple were any thing but barbarous.

It is unnecessary to enter into the much debated question concerning the antiquity of the use of the present Hebrew characters ; for it is quite admitted, by contending writers on the subject, that they were unquestionably in use before the birth of our Saviour.‡

I shall proceed to inquire into the probable period of the

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* Waserus says (p. 59) “ Jus cudendi monetam Hebræis liberum usque ad Vespasiani tempora.” See also anonymous work of “ the Knowledge of Medals,” p. 116.

† See his work upon coins, and his intemperate expressions contained in the preface, against the Rev. D. Jennings, p. xiii.

‡ See Calmet on Hebrew Coins, Bayer de Num. Samarit. p. 148. Morinus ut sup. p. 303.

stamping of this medal, and shall first repeat the observation, that we are not informed of such relics having been noticed by any of the early fathers of the Church.

The opinion of Wagenseil, against the antiquity or genuineness of these medals, is given in very decisive terms ; but in terms also which involve in them some weakness, and even contradiction. He commences with condemning, as altogether spurious, the coins which were imposed upon the public as being coins of Abraham, of Moses, and of David. He says, “ *Provocamus ad iudicium universorum qui veterem et genuinam pecuniam a novâ, atque ad similitudinem ejus effectâ, valent distinguere ; et multis evidentissimisque signis probatum dabunt, omnes scire siclos* sive nummos Judæorum, opus recens et καλὴ νόμματος esse.*” He then quotes the coinciding opinion of Carolus Patinus,† a well known authority upon the subject of coins ; and proceeds to relate, that the pilgrims to Palestine were all possessed with an anxiety to bring home sacred relics from the Holy Land ; and that, as those to Loretto, to Rome, and to other places, were wont to return with crosses and such like, so these pilgrims “ *conchis, crucibus, et sa-*

Waserus ut sup. Crinesius, p. 20. The period of the Jewish captivity seems to have been the most probable time for the change from the Samaritan to the Hebrew character. Waserus says, (p. 62,) “ *Reliquos Judæos ob secessionem X tribuum, partim odio &c. eis, non modo nullo sacrorum usu communicare, sed ne characterum formas &c. easdem retinere voluisse ; sed formam quadratam excogitasse.*” Crinesius condemns this, and observes, “ *Existimo illam potius de apostatis Israelitis X tribuum esse præsumendam, quam de Judæis, specialiter sic dictis.*”

* He does not seem to deny some shekels to be genuine, which even Pinkerton admits, but to speak only with reference to an antiquity so remote as the ages of Abraham, of Moses, and of David.

† See Pinkerton, Pref. p. vii. &c. ; he wrote his History of Medals in 1665.

“cratis nummis, redire solent.” From hence, as he asserts, the Jews in those parts took occasion to fabricate coins, and obtained from the sale thereof considerable gain. He then relates a story, extracted from a German annalist,* which I shall give from the original, of a Count Ruodolfus de Furndorf, who visited the Holy Land in 1180; and, being commissioned by the Abbot of St. Gallus, procured several relics from a monastery in Palestine, “quod Sm. Abraham nominatur.” These relics were transmitted home with much care; and, as the Count concludes, “in altari S. Galli, cum reliquiis nostris, sunt collocatæ.”

So far of these ancient Hebrew shekels and coins. Wagenseil then proceeds to observe, that a similar observation with this concerning their being forgeries, may be applied to the medals, “qui Servatoris nostri imagini Hebraicam addunt inscriptionem.” He argues, that if the Palestine forgers of relics were induced to make coins of Abraham and of David, to impose upon the pilgrims; much more so would they be tempted to strike medals of our Saviour, the great object of these pilgrimages—“nempe alicui Christiano, &c. verisimile visum est, nihil sacris viatoribus accidere posse gratius, quam si monetam Christi vultum exhibentem, e regione quam vivus incoluerat, iis liceret referre.”

Such is the opinion of this authority, in which he seems to be partly followed by Morinus; this latter author further adds, that the division of some of the Hebrew words, so as to have parts of the same word in separate lines, is an evidence of the forgery: and he also says, that the abbreviation of Hebrew words, by a final apo-

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* *Alemannicarum Rerum Scriptores*, tom. I. p. 18.

cope, as in the omission of Hajin from Jeshuang, was an innovation of the later Syrians. I shall revert to these observations, and conclude this account with this deduction, that, if these authors are to be credited, these medals are quite modern, and, according to Wagenseil, of the twelfth century at the earliest.

Let us now inquire, whether there be any evidence, upon which we can rest the presumption of an earlier date. I have already stated the circumstances which make against the supposition of their being of the first Christian age ; but there are not wanted learned opinions to give them very great antiquity. Hottinger and Waserus, in treating of them, seem to entertain no doubt of their being genuine remnants of the earliest possible date : at least, so far from expressing such a doubt, the latter acquaints us with circumstances, which I shall hereafter relate, and which are vouchers for the truth of the resemblance to our Saviour. Crinesius not only admits these medals to be genuine, but quotes them as collateral proofs of the use of the present Hebrew character in the time of Christ. He argues, that they were not coins, because such an “ image and superscription ” was alienissima a consensu gubernatorum Jerusehalamitanorum, penes quos fuit libertas excudendi monetæ ;” and determines, that “ a piis inter Christi fideles privatum procuratas invicem μνήμης ἀγάπης καὶ φιλίας χάριν fuisse oblatas :” and Morinus, although he inclines to the opinion of a later forgery, says of the medal of Theseus Ambrosius, which bore an inscription in Samaritan characters, that some of these people were Christians, (for which he quotes John iv. 39,) and that “ *pro-babilis est hos Samaritanos, ad conservandam suæ conversionis memoriam, hunc nummum privatim cudisse.*” He also goes so far

as to bring all these medals as authorities to demonstrate, that both Hebrew and Samaritan characters were in use at the period of our Saviour's life. Leusden calls his medal, "*Siclus Judæo-Christianus*," and says, that it was the fabrication of converted Jews; he quotes Alstedius, who ranks it under the title, "*posterior effigies sicli sacri*." The opinion of Alstedius concerning their origin is positive, he says, "*Sic enim statuo de tali nummo, post mortem Christi quidam Judæi receperunt Evangelium, hi igitur talem nummum loco veteris illius sicli substituerunt*."

It is to be remarked, that the converted Jews here spoken of, are implied to have struck this coin just after our Saviour's birth.

Let us now examine into the nature of the evidence which is given against them by Wagenseil; and I must premise, that, as an authority against their antiquity, we must consider him to stand alone. Patinus, whom he quotes as having condemned the coins of Abraham and of David, does not speak of these; and Morinus, who follows Wagenseil in some opinions, not only doubts upon this point, in opposition to him, as I have shewn above, but where he inclines to agree with him in others, is not altogether consistent in his reasonings. He thinks they may be forgeries, because parts of the same words are in different lines. But, surely, if the fabricator were, as Wagenseil supposes, a Christian, "*linguam Hebraicam edocto*", he must have understood the customary mode of writing that language; and, therefore, a deviation from practice must have been wilful, and not from ignorance. To meet this obvious answer, Morinus guesses that they were forged by Jews to deceive the Christians, and that the forgers introduced this error, that they might not deceive their own sect. This conjecture is palpably fu-

tile ; and, besides, it supposes what was not the fact, that none of the Christians were conversant in the Hebrew tongue. Indeed the division of the words is best accounted for by an observation, which Morinus elsewhere makes, that it necessarily took its rise in the constraint which the circular form of the medal put upon the engraver.

The observation of Morinus, that the final apocope in the abbreviation of Hebrew words is of modern invention, is scarcely founded in fact. The Hebrew scholar may be easily satisfied upon this point, by consulting the Lexicons and the writers upon this subject. We had occasion to notice the several meanings, which the single Aleph conveys.

But to return, we must narrow the testimony before us to that of Wagenseil, as I have before remarked.

In the first instance, then, it is a complete *non sequitur*, that, because a certain Count went to the convent of St. Abraham, to purchase relics, that he came home laden with forged coins of this patriarch. The original annals say no such thing, nor does Wagenseil inform us, that any such were in his time existing in the Abbey of St. Gallus. I confess, however, that although this matter is by no means proved, it is very far from being improbable. Admitting it, then, it by no means follows, as a logical deduction, that Palestine, at that time, gave birth to spurious medals of our Saviour. Observe also his contradictions : the forgery is committed by Christians SKILLED in the Hebrew tongue ; but when, to carry the important point of reading “ homo ” for “ lux ”, a Mem must be conjured up, it was, forsooth, omitted by the *carelessness common in tran-*

scription—"atque hujus quidem typum sculptor Christianus, rudis "Hebræarum litterarum, *absente autore*, incidit." This is plainly arguing in a circle, nor does the invention of the deputy engraver make it to be entirely logical. I shall here observe, that the converted Jews of Wagenseil are contemporary with the Crusaders; so that his argument is not supported by the authority of Alstedius.

I have yet to notice more particularly his assertion, that such medals were so common in Germany, that they were every where to be found suspended to the necks of children. But it is to be remarked, that this observation applies to a specimen which differs from that before us; and he admits, that another of these medals, (similar to the rest with regard to the subject matter,) was as rare, as any that the writers, who mention them, declare them all to be. How one specimen, therefore, happens to be so very common, requires some explanation; both to prevent the assertion from proving too much, and to reconcile it to the testimony of others, as well as to probability. What was considered as exceedingly rare by Theseus Ambrosius, and by writers cotemporary with Wagenseil, could not, in fact, have come to be so common in his time. I therefore conjecture, first, that of the medal, concerning which this author thus speaks, there were most probably both originals, and a second or counterfeit edition; and, secondly, that the abundance, which he describes, applies to the latter alone. We cannot, by any other supposition, account for so great a plenty succeeding to a rarity so considerable; and the author of the anonymous work of the "*Knowledge of Medals*"*, affords us information, which seems to prove this position

* This book is, I believe, a translation from Jobert, and the work alluded to by Pinkerton. See his Preface.

to be just: he asserts, (p. 115.) “ I know somebody did think fit “ to stamp a few,” (scil. Hebrew coins,) “ in *Germany*; and that “ *within this little while*; thus the medal of Jesus Christ, though “ perhaps *made* by some converted Jews, is one of these,” &c. These medals, thus fabricated “ *within a little while*,” could be only the copies of those, which, in the commencement of the sixteenth century, are described as being so rare; and they must have had some value attached to them, as charms or otherwise, or expense would not have been incurred in their imitation. The very discussions that have taken place among the learned concerning them, demonstrate, that they have been considered by the disputants as being curious, and also rare. In fine, it is quite manifest, from a passage in *Morinus*, that those specimens, which *Wagenseil* saw in common use, could not have been originals. He speaks of one of them as “ celebratus in gazophylacio Pontificio accuraté conservatus, quare “ qui Pontifices ab omni errore tutos profitentur, vix possunt ejus “ sinceritatem in dubium revocare.” From hence it follows clearly, that, although the originals might have been possibly themselves the forgery of imposture, they could not be the same of which *Wagenseil* speaks; and that the assertion which he makes concerning them can only apply to the copy.

The Vice Provost has permitted me to add an ingenious conjecture, that he has made, relating to some cabalistic meaning, which he supposes to be couched in the inscription. It contains two final Mems, both of them “ dilated, such as we find them made at the end “ of a line, in order to fill up space; though here they are not at “ the end of lines, and consequently it could not have been for that “ purpose, that they were dilated. I think them, therefore,” he says,

“ to have been thus dilated, in order exactly to resemble the original
“ whence they were taken, and which original I would thus express :

משיח מלך 1st line, two words, seven letters; the last a final, and never dilated.

בא בשלום } 2d and 3d lines, two words, and seven letters;
 יאר מאדם } the last letter to each a final Mem dilated.

עשוי חי 4th line, two words and six letters.

To supply a seventh letter in the last line, which is necessary towards affording the complete division, and the perfect total of twenty-eight, he supposes the letter η to have been omitted from the verb $\eta\chi$, by Apocope; “which could produce no difficulty as to the “sense of the word, because it is of such frequent recurrence;” and there was no space to admit on the medal the “letter η , which, if “it had been there, would have been probably dilated.”

He therefore supposes it to have been copied from some book ; and that, consisting thus of twenty-eight letters, (a perfect number,) placed with a necromantic arrangement, it was fancied to have been possessed of some charm, and was therefore chosen as the motto of these medals, which were frequently used as amulets.

It must, however, be here remarked, that, however this ingenious hypothesis might possibly apply to this medal, it cannot to that of Theseus Ambrosius ; nor to the first of Wagenseil, nor to the Anglesea medal.

I have now summed up the evidence for and against the great antiquity of these medals. I cannot get over the silence of the Fathers, particularly when I consider the great estimation in which

Morinus mentions them to have been holden by the Popes ; to me therefore it is clear, that they are not of the first age the Christian æra. I hardly think, that they were the fabrication of the Greek emperors,* whose sacred inscriptions, above alluded to, were all in the Grecian character ; nor can any good reason be assigned for their preference of the Hebrew, this not being the letter in which the New Testament, excepting perhaps the Gospel by St. Mathew, was originally written. They must be of earlier date than the age of Leo X. ; for, at that period, they are spoken of by Theseus Ambrosius as being of uncommon rarity ; See also Morinus as quoted above. I suppose them therefore to have been the fabrication either of the age of Charlemagne, or of the Crusades. In favour of the first supposition there is (besides the analogy, which Doctor Barrett has observed between the inscription and the motto of that prince,) this fact to be considered, that it was just at this time, A. D. 787, that the introduction of image worship, sanctioned by the 2d Council of Nice, may be considered as bearing date ; for the second it may be alleged, that the account of Wagenseil, who places their origin in Palestine, is at least considerably plausible. The words of Morinus plainly intimate, that they were preserved to assist the purposes of Papal

* Dr. Barrett observes an analogy between the inscription and the motto of Charlemagne, which was thus written, and in this order,

“ Christus regnat,
“ vincit,
“ imperat” or triumphat.

“ The first line,” he says, answers to “ Christus regnat :” the second line explains his conquest, that it consists in his being the author of peace ; or, to use a classical expression, he “ was “ sine clade victor :” the third and fourth lines explain the nature of his kingdom, or “ triumph,” &c.

imposture ; but the veneration with which they were guarded at Rome, no more proves their origin to have been Roman, than the finding of a specimen in Ireland demonstrates any thing beyond the fact, that it was lost there.

It is a remarkable circumstance, that most of the specimens of similar medals, which have been noticed by the learned, are impressions of different dies, agreeing with each other neither in their sizes or inscriptions. There are five varieties at the least.

With regard to the resemblance, Waserus* has given us the following curious account :—“ Sed neque hoc silentio transmitti debet, “ viz. imaginem Domini, quæ nummo illo nostro exprimitur, ad eam “ descriptionem esse designatam, quam Lentulus, civis Romanus, “ et Judææ olim præses, ad Imperatorem Tiberium misisse vulgo “ perhibetur.” His account then proceeds with a fine detail of the resemblance, describing it precisely according to that which, whether handed down by tradition, or acquiesced in as just from its suitable expression, has been chosen by the common † agreement of Carlo Dolce and all others, both painters and sculptors, as best fitted to convey a proper idea of our Saviour’s sacred countenance and appearance. Although Waserus says, “ *vulgo* perhibetur,” I have not been successful in my attempts to discover upon what

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* P. 63. Waserus’ observations on the subject are printed in the “ Critici Sacri,” Amstel. 1698, vol. vi. at the end. His plate is copied in the same work, see vol. i. tab. 12.

† The head of Christ is always represented as elevated, and the hair always falls down along the sides : a mode of representation adopted, as Dr. Spurzheim contends, by a common sentiment among modern artists, as best expressing the incarnate God, p. 340.—Denon. (V. I. p. 213. Ed. 1800, in 8°.) considers the resemblance of our Saviour, which is now commonly received, to be traditional, and not to have been invented after the revival of the arts.

authority he grounds the above anecdote. It is not to be found among the extraordinary mass of evidence, collected from writers both sacred and profane, which Rendle has accumulated to demonstrate that Tiberius was a Christian emperor;* but it is proper to observe of the bust, that, although it does not appear in the plate of the fac simile, there is in the original a manifest fulness on the temples that plainly indicates a large quantity of hair, descending from the crown along the sides of the head.

It remains to observe upon the conjecture, that the metal of which this medal consists is Corinthian brass, that such is altogether wild. This mixture was accidentally formed by the fusion of metals at the burning of the Temple of Corinth; and it was all of it converted, at the time, into statues, urns, and such like. Pinkerton asserts, that he never met with any of it in coins.

To conclude, I cannot but consider this medal to be a relic of

* With relation to resemblances of Christ, Theophanes, in *Chronographia*, p. 41, makes mention of a statue of our Lord, that was in the City of Cæsarea Philippi. It was said to have been erected to his honour by the woman whose issue of blood he healed. This was destroyed by Julian, who placed his own statue in its stead. The first plate of the *Archæologia*, vol. i. contains a picture of our Saviour, taken from a painting of great antiquity, precisely similar to that upon our medal, and to the traditional portraits of which we have spoken. Beneath it is the following inscription: "This present figure is the similitude of our Lord Jhû oure Savior, imprinted in amiruld (? emerald) by the predecessors of the Greate Turke, and sent to the Pope Innocent VIII. at the cost of the Greate Turke, for a token for his cause, to redeem his brother that was takyn presoner." Pope Innocent died in 1492. We are not further informed concerning this interesting portrait, in the letter that accompanies it: not even of where it was found, or why the inscription is in English; but, from this latter circumstance, I suspect it to have been a more modern copy of the original sent to Innocent VIII.

great interest and value; we must at all events assign to it a respectable antiquity; and it doubtless possesses a sufficient rarity, in the present day, to give it some charms even in the eyes of a connoisseur. It enjoys this further claim upon taste, that it is a fine specimen of art; and, as such, is certainly very far from being a disgrace to the cabinets of the curious. This medal is the property of Mr. Corlett of Cork.

Since the reading of the preceding paper, a medal, precisely similar to that in the possession of Mr. Corlett, has been exhibited by the Rev. Robert Walsh, of Finglass. It is more perfect than the former; contains the same inscription; and has the remains of an haft at the side, by which it is quite obvious, that it was once hung as an amulet. The Beth and Hain, in the second and third lines, are perfect.

The appearance of this medal makes it clear that they were used suspended, as Wagenseil describes; and it is more than probable, that they were originally struck to answer the purpose of an amulet. I shall here subjoin the very ingenious attempt of the Rev. Dr. Barrett, to construe the cabbalistic meaning of the inscription, which he has made since the former part of this sheet went to press.

I shall premise a short account of the Cabbala, abstracted from the Encyclopedia Britannica.

“There is another Cabbala, which consists in searching for abstruse and mysterious significations of a word in Scripture, from whence they borrow certain explanations, &c.” One kind of this species “consists in taking the letters of a Hebrew word for

“ ciphers or arithmetical numbers, and explaining every word by “ the arithmetical value of the letters whereof it is composed.” It appears, that cabbalistic inscriptions were common upon amulets; and further, that our Saviour and his miracles were much connected, in the minds of some visionaries, with the mysteries of the Cabbala. We may then reasonably conclude, that this art, which was chiefly employed in expressing or explaining hidden meanings of a theological description, through the medium and connection of fancied powers existing in numbers, was employed in the formation of such an amulet as this. The Vice Provost’s construction is thus.

There are 2 words in each line—This number is the first of the equal numbers.

There are 3 meanings, or a triple one—This is the first of the unequal numbers; unity not being considered as number. 2 and 3 are lucky and unlucky numbers in conjuring.

4 lines—4 is the first of the square numbers, and represents a surface.

7 letters on each line—the number of days in the week.

8—the number of total words, and the first of the cube numbers.

28—the number of letters, and a perfect number.

52—the sum of all the foregoing, and the number of weeks in the year.

So there are 2, 3, 4, 7, 8, 28, and 52.

He construes the conjurations then in this manner: “ May this “ amulet prove a *perfect* (28) preservation to its wearer; in any situation of life, whether *prosperous* or *unlucky* (2 and 3); in every “ portion of space (5 and 8), and part of time (7 and 52); by virtue “ of him, whose name and image it bears; who reigns the “ Messiah, &c.”